

CHAPTER NO. 697

SENATE BILL NO. 3359

By Herron, Kurita

Substituted for: House Bill No. 3089

By Borchert

AN ACT to name U.S. Highway 79 in Stewart County in honor of the late Van Riggins, Sr.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this general assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor the memory of those exemplary public servants who contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessean is more deserving of this honor than the late Van Lewis Riggins, Sr., of Stewart County, who had formerly served with acumen and diligence as Executive Director of the Stewart County Chamber of Commerce and as Superintendent of the Stewart County school system; and

WHEREAS, Van Riggins, Sr., was truly a man of the people, and his commitment to the health and prosperity of his fellow citizens was both stalwart and exemplary; and

WHEREAS, few people have touched as many lives as Mr. Riggins, a gentleman who attained excellence both as an educator and as a public servant; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Riggins was a person of impeccable morals and irreproachable integrity, and he worked assiduously to establish a brighter future for the good people of Stewart County through his participation in numerous civic improvement projects; and

WHEREAS, before his "retirement" in 1988, Van Riggins, Sr., served with acumen as an educator of young minds; from 1949-1952, he taught Social Studies at Stewart County High School, where he later enjoyed outstanding tenures as Assistant Principal (1952-1956) and Principal (1956-1972). He then served with distinction as Superintendent of Stewart County Schools from 1972-1988; and

WHEREAS, in the finest traditions of the "Volunteer State", Mr. Riggins then served without pay as the Executive Director of the Stewart County Chamber of Commerce for almost fifteen years, "presenting a face of gentility and warmth to those inside and outside the county line"; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this general assembly should commemorate the bountiful life of Van Lewis Riggins, Sr., an exceptional public servant and human being who lived and breathed for his beloved Stewart County for over eighty years; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, that segment of U.S. Highway 79 within Stewart County is hereby designated the "Van Riggins Memorial Highway" as a lasting tribute to an excellent public servant, astute educator, and even more accomplished human being.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect two (2) suitable signs or to affix two (2) suitable markers at appropriate locations, such signs or markers designating U.S. Highway 79 within Stewart County as the "Van Riggins Memorial Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. (1) This act shall become operative only if Stewart County, Tennessee, either remits the estimated cost of the erection of such signs to the Department of Transportation within one (1) year of the effective date of this act or manufactures such signs in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2). Stewart County shall make such payment prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to Stewart County within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, Stewart County shall remit an amount equal to the difference in such costs to the department within thirty (30) days of receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

(2) Stewart County may manufacture and erect such signs, provided that such signs are manufactured and erected pursuant to state and federal guidelines and approved by the department.

SECTION 6. The appellation "Van Riggins Memorial Highway" provided for in Section 1 of this act is for honorary purposes only and nothing contained herein shall be construed as requiring the alteration of any address, or the governmental system for assigning addresses, in any county, municipality, or other governmental entity affected by this act.

SECTION 7. Nothing contained in this act shall be construed as requiring the alteration of any previously named segment or segments of, or bridges on, U.S. Highway 79 described in Section 1 of this act as the "Van Riggins Memorial Highway".

SECTION 8. The Department of Transportation is directed to add appropriate language and/or symbols to include the City of Bristol as a destination on existing signage for Exit 69 (State Route 394), both northbound and southbound, on Interstate Highway 81 in Sullivan County.

SECTION 9. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect and maintain a sign bearing the language "BRISTOL NEXT 6 INTERCHANGES" on Interstate Highway 81 northbound between Exit 66 and Exit 69 at a location consistent with current Federal Highway Administration and Tennessee Department of Transportation regulations to complement similar signage already in place on Interstate Highway 81 southbound in Virginia.

SECTION 10. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect and maintain a sign for White Top Creek Park (formerly known as the Multi-Purpose Park) in the City of Bristol on State Route 394 east of White Top Road at the entrance to White Top Creek Park. Such sign shall contain language and/or symbols sufficient to direct motorists to the entrance to White Top Creek Park.

SECTION 11. The provisions of this act providing for the erection or modification of signage for the City of Bristol on Interstate Highway 81 and State Route 394 shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.


SECTION 12. (1) The provisions of this act providing for the erection or modification of signage for the City of Bristol on Interstate Highway 81 and State Route 394 shall become operative only if the City of Bristol in Sullivan County, Tennessee, either remits the estimated cost of the erection of such signs to the Department of Transportation within one (1) year of the effective date of this act or manufactures such signs in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2). The City of Bristol shall make such payment prior to any expenditure by the state for the manufacture or installation of such signs. The department shall return any unused portion of the estimated cost to the City of Bristol within thirty (30) days of the erection of such signs. If the actual cost exceeds the estimated cost, the City of Bristol shall remit an amount equal to the difference in such costs to the department within thirty (30) days of receiving an itemized invoice of the actual cost from the department.

(2) The City of Bristol may manufacture and erect such signs provided, that such signs are manufactured and erected pursuant to state and federal guidelines and approved by the department.

SECTION 13. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

PASSED: May 10, 2004


JOHN S. WILDER
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE


JIMMY NAIFEH, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 18th day of May 2004


PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR